

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated July 13, 2005, the Applicant respectfully submits the above amendments and the following remarks.

Claim 1, the only independent claims, has been amended to recite the steps of:

- providing a stent holder adapted to move stents into and out of a coating chamber in a continuous fashion;
- having the holder move at least a first stent into the coating chamber;
- contacting at least the first stent with the vapor, thereby coating at least a portion of the first stent with the polymer and therapeutic agent;
- having the holder move at least the first stent out of the coating chamber;
- having the holder move at least a second stent into the coating chamber; and
- contacting at least the second stent with the vapor, thereby coating at least a portion of the second stent with the polymer and therapeutic agent.

These claim amendments correspond to features of the invention in the original disclosure. For example, page 4, lines 9-14, of the specification states as follows:

Figure 1 includes vacuum chamber 10 enclosing stent 11 arranged on holder 12. Holder 12 may be adapted to move stent 11 laterally, longitudinally, vertically and/or rotatably. Holder 12 may be adapted to hold more than one stent, and may be adapted to move stent 11 out of vacuum chamber 10 and move another stent 11 into vacuum chamber 10. Holder 12 may be adapted to continuously move stent 11 and replace it with a new stent 11 in order to coat stent 11 in a continuous fashion rather than in a batch coating process.

Specification, page 4, lines 9-14 (emphasis added).

The Applicant respectfully submits that the invention as now claimed is neither disclosed nor suggested by the prior art of record. The Wu article, 398-99 Thin Solid Films 607-614, (“Wu”) does not disclose or suggest a stent holder or any holder for moving any objects continuously into and out of a coating chamber. Similarly, U.S. Patent No. 5,968,092 to

Buscemi et al. (the "Buscemi '092 patent") does not disclose or suggest any holder for moving any objects continuously into and out of a coating chamber.

The Applicant's invention is advantageous in that it allows a continuous process, allowing successive coatings of stents using the frozen target and vaporization technique, whereby a single holder is adapted to repeatedly move successive stents into and out of the coating chamber for coating. The Applicant respectfully submits that this invention is neither taught nor suggested by the prior art of record.

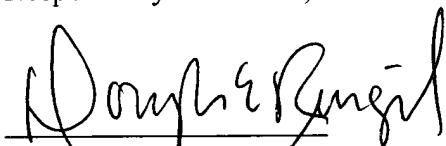
On the basis of the foregoing, the Applicant would like to respectfully request further examination of this application. The Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims of the present application are now in condition for allowance. Prompt consideration and allowance of the present application are therefore earnestly solicited.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees and credit any overpayments associated with this filing to Kenyon & Kenyon, Deposit Account No. 11-0600. Should any questions arise, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4225.

Respectfully submitted,

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By:


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